

Worcester entomologist, J.E. Fletcher, and are labelled "ex. *Populus tremula*, Worcs.". Three are dated "6.8.1876", and one "4.8.1876". I am not certain if this was date of emergence or collection. So *sagitella* has, it seems, been a British insect for a long time, and is clearly not a recent colonist.

The other interesting problem concerns its voltinism. There was no sign of old July mines in September 1995, and no later ones in 1976. Price's mines were found in July, as were mine in 1976, but I wonder if it is univoltine, with the imago overwintering, as in *comparella*? I have never found the latter so I do not know if it always has two generations. Perhaps *sagitella* likes really hot summers and has a variable time of emergence, and maybe the best time to look for the mines most years is in September.

Salix feeding *Phyllonorycter* occasionally mine aspen and *P. hilarella* (Zett.) has been bred from aspen by Dr M.W. Harper (*pers. comm.*). However *sagitella* mines are quite distinctive as they are very flat, hardly contorting the upper surface of the leaf, and the underside is smooth and pale.

References

- Michaelis, H.N., 1979. Exhibit – the 1978 Annual Exhibition. *Proceedings and Translations of the British Entomological and Natural History Society*. **12**: 9.
- Price, L. 1977. *Phyllonorycter sagitella* (Bjerkander, 1790) = *tremulae* Zeller, 1846 (Lep.: Gracillariidae): A species new to Britain. *Entomologist's Record & Journal of Variation*. **89**: 106-107.

Red Admiral butterfly *Vanessa atalanta* (L.) (Lep.: Nymphalidae in January

On Sunday 14 January 1996, a sunny day when the temperature in central London was recorded as reaching 13°C, I watched a Red Admiral butterfly in my garden at Orpington, on the outskirts of London. A few days later, on 17 January, I saw another butterfly sunning itself on the wall of our garage. Evidently the unusually warm and mild weather at that time had interrupted the winter slumbers of one or more individuals attempting to hibernate.

There are numerous reports in the literature of this butterfly species attempting to overwinter, the latest date for the London area being in February at Ruislip (Plant, 1987. *Butterflies of the London Area*. London Natural History Society). Whether or not the Orpington examples managed to resume their hibernation during the cold spell in February 1996 and survive to the spring must be in doubt. Plant (*op. cit.*) states that "There remains no confirmed records of Red Admirals truly surviving the winter in the London area."— PETER GANN, 11 Honeybourne Way, Petts Wood, Orpington, Kent BR5 1EZ.